

Gone but not forgotten

The LMA, in keeping with the rest of the football world, was deeply saddened and shocked by the death of one of our World Cup winners Alan Ball.

Alan, a member of the LMA after becoming a successful manager following his legendary footballing career, will be deeply missed by everyone in the game.

LMA vice-chairman Frank Clark represented the organisation at Alan's funeral in Winchester.

"It was a tremendously moving occasion and the huge attendance demonstrated the respect and standing which Alan was afforded by everyone in football," said Frank.

"Alan's passing is a sad loss to the world and the LMA sends its sympathies and best wishes to Alan's family."



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Fit to ma Dugmore

Managers are being afforded the highest levels of health care, thanks to the League Managers Association.

Being a professional football manager brings with it a host of stresses, trials and tribulations which can have serious health repercussions.

But the Fit to Manage programme initiated by the LMA back in 2002 is now delivering real results and ensures that managers are as best possible prepared for the many and varied challenges.

A programme called 'Fit to Manage' was implemented to specifically ensure that managers do not neglect their own health.

The programme aims to curtail the rising heart rates and blood pressure levels of those at the cutting edge of the game, and Dr Dorian Dugmore is at the centre of a plan which aims to change the lives of millions of people.

A total of 92 League managers are now on board with the scheme and the positive affects are already beginning to show.

"This year will be the fifth time I have spoken at the Congress of Stress," Dr Dugmore explains, "And every year I point out the example of this experiment in football."

"Every single manager who visits us has said how impressed they are with the tests, and realise how important it is to look after their wellbeing."

"The interesting thing about football managers is that they spend their whole career worrying about the health of their players and staff, and of course they must also cope with the media pressure."

"When they visit us though, they realise they must also take care of themselves, and they appreciate that there are people here to look after them."

Although as one might expect managers are relatively fit for their age across this population of largely ex-professional players, over 40 per cent recorded significant cardiovascular problems including dangerous heart rhythms which could be life threatening, significant blockages within the coronary arteries, heart attacks, and serious heart valve abnormalities.

In addition a significant percentage of the Managers were shown to have dangerously high blood pressures and blood fats (cholesterol). Some of these risks were even shown to exist in their first generation families and relatives. The good news is that those Managers who have complied with the Fit To Manage programme have begun to significantly reduce and/or control these risks.

One finding that became very apparent is that the Managers as expected were totally passionate

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about football, despite their constant fear of being sacked, heavy emphasis on winning and the pressures of either simply surviving if they were towards the bottom of the league or winning championships and trophies at the other end of the spectrum.

This is where Fit To Manage comes into its own, notably to serially assess the manager's health, help them cope with the pressures of the game through improved lifestyle changes and constant monitoring and to alert them of problems before they manifest themselves as a serious sometimes life threatening illness.

One only has to look at the lifestyles of Managers to realize why their risk for heart and other lifestyle diseases is so evident. Long working weeks averaging between 80 to 100 hours in the Premiership, constant pressure for their teams to perform and win, and a lifestyle that very often is characterized by fast food, travelling large distances and constant media examination for their every move.

Add to this the anger and frustration that often comes with the constant "lash of ambition" and you have a recipe for potential stress related ill health. The world famous Harvard Medical School have shown very clearly that anger and frustration triples the risk of premature heart disease. This point was dramatically shown when the heart rates, blood pressures and cholesterols of two Premiership Managers were higher during a post Christmas game as compared with being pushed to exhaustion during exercise stress testing in the clinical laboratory setting.

The LMA have given a huge rise in publicity to the 'Fit to Manage'

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campaign, which assesses managers throughout the year.

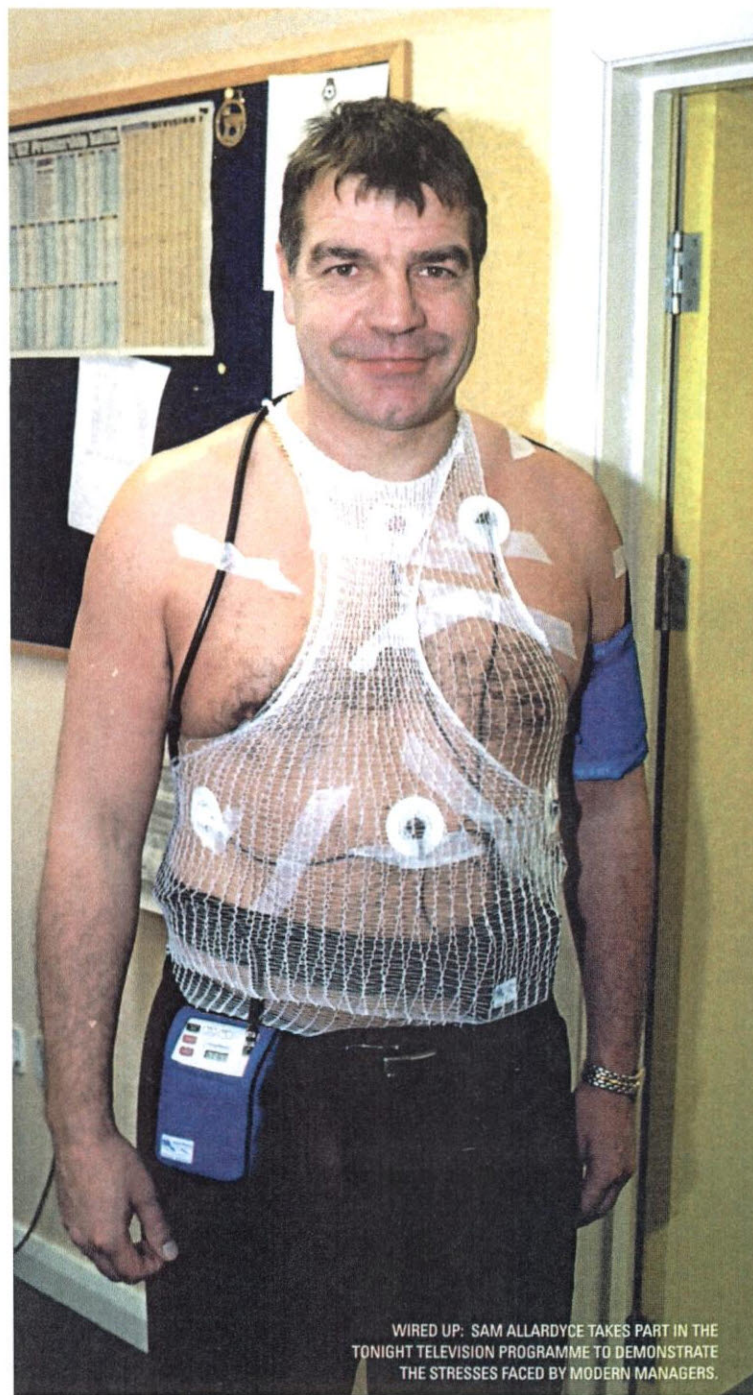
Trevor McDonald's 'Tonight Programme' once highlighted the issues within management, and Sam Allardyce and Dave Bassett both underwent public tests to show the affects on the body throughout their day job.

An initial day of testing allows doctors to read the blood and stress levels of an individual at rest, before managers are put through a 90 minute exercise regime to monitor their health in various states of condition.

Once these results have been analysed, it is possible to spot a potential problem, or diagnose an area in which improvement needs to be made.

"One manager who came in here had a resting heart rate of 214bpm," Dr Dugmore says. "It was clear he could not continue in that state of health, and within two weeks we had his rate back to normal. It is a fantastic example of how this programme can make a difference to people's lives."

Managers who undergo the initial tests then return for assessment two or three times per year. But it is not just the managers that benefit from the tests, their families can too. And



WIRED UP: SAM ALLARDYCE TAKES PART IN THE TONIGHT TELEVISION PROGRAMME TO DEMONSTRATE THE STRESSES FACED BY MODERN MANAGERS.

it seems even spectators will be, soon.

"Some of the managers told us about a family history within certain areas, so we will then get their families in and check them too," adds Dugmore. "Often the men will ask for their other half to come in, as they find it important for them to understand the health issues.

"I have been speaking to a doctor at Real Madrid, and the next stage will be to improve conditions for spectators. It seems they too are going through a lot of stress while watching their sides."

The LMA will continue to support the cause, and Dr Dugmore revealed that conditions for managers are about to get even better.

"Stuart Pearce is a great example of how things are progressing," he insists. "Stuart came straight out of playing, and said he wanted to be able compare his heart condition through different stages of his career. That is very important, and will be done more as players make the change from player to manager.

"By the end of the year we hope to be able to test managers in their working environment, wiring them up while the match is actually being played. That is possible thanks to the backing of the LMA and the Premier League. Now things are really looking up for everyone."